

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 00224 01 OF 02 132347Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /059 W
-----011720 140006Z /66

P 132335Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5963
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL TORONTO
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 00224

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, ECON, CA
SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON TRUDEAU NEW YEAR'S
INTERVIEW

REF: OTTAWA 14

1. SUMMARY: BASED ON REPORTS FROM ALL THE CONSULATES
GENERAL AND FROM SUBSEQUENT MEDIA COVERAGE, IT IS
EVIDENT THAT TRUDEAU'S REMARKS ON POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE
IN QUEBEC HAVE PRODUCED STRONGLY MIXED REACTIONS. BY
THESE COMMENTS, THE PRIME MINISTER MAY HAVE GAINED SOME
GROUND AMONG RED-NECK ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING
CANADA, BUT HE WAS CRITICIZED BY SEVERAL WESTERN
PREMIERS AND A NUMBER OF EDITORIALISTS AND NEWSPAPER
COMMENTATORS, NOT BECAUSE OF THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS
REMARKS, BUT FOR RESPONDING AT ALL TO A HYPOTHETICAL
QUESTION OR FOR REFERRING IN HIS ANSWER TO THE WAR
MEASURES ACT AND THE FLQ CRISIS OF 1970. THE CONSULATES
GENERAL IN QUEBEC CITY AND MONTREAL BELIEVE THAT
TRUDEAU'S RESPONSE CAN EASILY BE EXPLOITED BY THE PARTI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 00224 01 OF 02 132347Z

QUEBECOIS (PQ). BOTH THESE POSTS, AS WE DO, ALSO REGARD
AS WISHFUL THINKING TRUDEAU'S ASSERTIONS THAT PQ IS
NOW ON THE DEFENSIVE AND THAT IT HAS SUFFERED "FAILURE
AFTER FAILURE" OVER THE PAST YEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. THOUGH PHILLIPS' INTERVIEW WITH TRUDEAU WAS BROAD-
CAST NATIONALLY, IT ATTRACTED ONLY MODERATE MEDIA

ATTENTION, PERHAPS BECAUSE IT OCCURRED OVER LONG HOLIDAY WEEKEND AND BECAUSE, WITH ONE NOTABLE EXCEPTION, PRIME MINISTER ESSENTIALLY REPEATED HIS WELL-KNOWN VIEWS ON NATIONAL UNITY, CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, AND THE ECONOMY. EXCEPTION WAS TRUDEAU'S ANSWER TO PHILLIPS' HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION ABOUT HOW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD RESPOND IF PARTI QUEBECOIS GOVERNMENT UNILATERALLY DECLARED INDEPENDENCE OR COMMITTED SOME OTHER ILLEGAL ACT. PRIME MINISTER'S INDICATION THAT HE WOULD NOT BE "SHY ABOUT USING THE SWORD", AS HE DID DURING 1970 FLQ CRISIS, IMMEDIATELY ATTRACTED MEDIA ATTENTION AND WAS GENERALLY REPORTED OUT OF CONTEXT.

3. PUBLIC REACTION TO THESE REMARKS WAS DISTINCTLY MIXED. SOME OBSERVERS FELT THAT THEY HAD A FAVORABLE IMPACT AMONG RED-NECK ELEMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE WEST, WHO ARE BIGOTED IN THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS FRENCH-CANADIANS. AS CONSULATE GENERAL WINNIPEG REPORTED, "NEARLY EVERYBODY THOUGHT (TRUDEAU'S COMMENTS) WOULD DO NOTHING BUT HELP HIM IN THE CANADIAN WEST AT THE TIME OF THE NEXT FEDERAL ELECTIONS."

4. ON OTHER HAND, PREMIERS BLAKENEY, LOUGHEED, AND BENNETT INDIVIDUALLY CRITICIZED THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS. THOUGH THEY DID NOT TAKE ISSUE WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT HE SAID, THEY DID QUESTION THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 00224 01 OF 02 132347Z

ADVISABILITY OF HIS ANSWERING THE HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION AND HIS REFERRING TO THE FLQ CRISIS OF 1970. SIMILAR CRITICISM WAS ALSO MADE BY EDITORIALISTS AND COMMENTATORS IN A NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS, INCLUDING THE TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL, THE OTTAWA JOURNAL, OTTAWA CITIZEN, THE MONTREAL GAZETTE, THE TORONTO SUN, THE WINNIPEG TRIBUNE, AND THE VANCOUVER SUN AND PROVINCE.

5. WHETHER OR NOT TRUDEAU GAINED ANY POLITICAL GROUND IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING CANADA BY HIS REMARKS ON THE POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THESE REMARKS HAD A GENERALLY NEGATIVE IMPACT IN QUEBEC. AS MOST PQ LEADERS WERE OUT OF TOWN, THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE REACTION FROM QUEBEC CITY BEYOND CLAUDE MORIN'S COMMENT THAT "THE PEOPLE OF QUEBEC HAVE A DEMOCRATIC RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, REGARDLESS OF WHAT MR. TRUDEAU SAYS." AS THE CONSULATES GENERAL IN MONTREAL AND QUEBEC CITY REPORTED, HOWEVER, TRUDEAU HAS LEFT HIMSELF WIDE OPEN TO ACCUSATIONS OF BEING AUTHORITARIAN AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC, BOTH FAVORITE PQ THEMES.

6. BOTH THESE POSTS ALSO REGARDED AS WISHFUL THINKING

THE PRIME MINISTER'S ASSERTIONS THAT THE PQ IS NOW
ON THE DEFENSIVE AND THAT IT HAS SUFFERED "FAILURE
AFTER FAILURE" OVER PAST YEAR. WHILE THE PQ HAS
MANAGED TO ALIENATE IMPORTANT SEGMENTS OF QUEBEC
SOCIETY, IT IS STILL FAVORABLY REGARDED BY MOST
QUEBECOIS AND LEVESQUE'S PERSONAL POPULARITY REMAINS
HIGH. MAJOR UNCERTAINTY IS STATE OF ECONOMY AND,

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 00224 02 OF 02 132349Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /059 W
-----011747 140005Z /66

P 132335Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5964
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL TORONTO
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 OTTAWA 00224

THOUGH PQ SEEMS TO HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH ITS LINE THAT
THE ECONOMY IS IN POOR SHAPE THROUGHOUT CANADA, THIS
ARGUMENT MAY WEAR THIN OVER TIME.

7. MARC LALONDE, MINISTER OF STATE FOR FEDERAL-
PROVINCIAL RELATIONS, AND GORDON ROBERTSON, SECRETARY
TO THE CABINET FOR FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS,
SEPARATELY INDICATED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT TRUDEAU
HAD NOT PLANNED TO GET INTO THE ISSUE OF POSSIBLE
USE OF FORCE IN QUEBEC, BUT HAD DONE SO ONLY IN
RESPONSE TO PHILLIPS' HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION. BOTH
SITUATE TRUDEAU'S REMARKS IN THE CONTEXT OF "PHASE
TWO" OF TRUDEAU'S QUEBEC STRATEGY--GOING OVER TO THE
ATTACK--BUT ADMIT THAT HE DIDN'T GET MUCH OUT OF THE
OPERATION. ENDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978OTTAWA00224
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780021-0299
Format: TEL
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780165/aaaacdbb.tel
Line Count: 166
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c023fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 OTTAWA 14
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3777724
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON TRUDEAU NEW YEAR'S INTERVIEW
TAGS: PGOV, ECON, SOPN, CA, (TRUDEAU, PIERRE ELLIOT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c023fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014